CLAIMS

1. A method for illuminating one or more components of a data-entry apparatus comprising the steps of:

making said one or more components of optically transmissive material; and

providing a luminescent sheet underlying said one or more components to provide an intensity of illumination to said components visual to a user of the apparatus.

2. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of;

providing a photosensitive device to control the intensity of illumination provided by said luminescent sheet in response to an intensity of light in an environment external to said apparatus.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

providing an intensity control device to enable the user of said apparatus to vary the intensity of illumination provided by said luminescent sheet.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein luminescent sheets of different colors illuminate different components of said apparatus.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein different ones of said components may be tinted with different colors to emit light of different colors.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein different ones of said components may comprise phosphors of different colors to emit light of different colors.

7. A method for illuminating keys of a data-entry apparatus comprising the steps of:

making said keys of an optically transmissive material;

providing one or more flexible luminescent sheets underlying said keys to provide an intensity of illumination to said keys visual to a user of the apparatus.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein different keys or groups of keys are illuminated by different colors by providing luminescent sheets that emit light of different colors underlying different keys or groups of keys.

9. The method of claim 7, wherein different keys or groups of keys are tinted with different colors to provide illuminated keys or groups of keys that emit light of different colors.

10. The method of claim 7, wherein different keys or groups of keys are made of optically transmissive materials comprising phosphors that emit light of different colors to provide keys or groups of keys that emit light of different colors.

11. The method of claim 7, further comprising the step of:

providing an optically transmissive top plate with a surface and areas through which said keys extend.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein said top plate comprises phosphors to emit light of a desired color.

13. The method of claim 11, wherein said top plate is tinted to emit light of a desired color.

14. The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of:

providing one or more luminescent sheets underlying said top plate to provide illumination of said top plate visual to said user.

15. A data-entry apparatus with one or more illuminated components comprising:

one or more components comprising an optically transmissive material; and

a flexible luminescent sheet underlying said one or more components to provide an intensity of illumination to said components visual to a user of the apparatus.

16. The apparatus of claim 15 further comprising:

a photosensitive device to control the intensity of illumination provided by said luminescent sheet in response to an intensity of light in an environment external to said apparatus.

17. The apparatus of claim 15, further comprising:

an intensity control device to enable a user of said apparatus to vary the intensity of illumination provided by said luminescent sheet.

18. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein luminescent sheets of different colors illuminate different components of said apparatus.

19. The method of claim 15, wherein said luminescent sheet is adhered to an underlying surface of one of said one or more components.

20. A data entry apparatus with illuminated keys comprising:

keys of an optically transmissive material;

one or more flexible luminescent sheets underlying said keys to provide an intensity of illumination to said keys visual to a user of the apparatus.

21. The apparatus of claim 20, wherein different keys or groups of keys emit light of different colors.

22. The apparatus of claim 20, wherein one or more of said keys are made of an optically transmissive material comprising phosphors.

23. The apparatus of claim 20, further comprising:

an optically transmissive key board top plate.

24. The apparatus of claim 21, wherein said top plate emits light of a desired color.

25. The apparatus of claim 24, further comprising;

one or more luminescent sheets underlying said top plate to provide illumination of said top plate visual to said user.

26. An illuminated mouse comprising:

one or more components comprising an optically transmissive material; and

a flexible luminescent sheet underlying said one or more components to provide an intensity of illumination to said components visual to a user of the apparatus.